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ABSTRACT

This book seeks to set the record straight about today's "reading wars," and analyzes the three major "battle cries" of whole language critics. In a step-by-step dissection, the book reiterates the three arguments, then explores the most salient studies that support or refute them. According to the book, the three claims are: eye movement studies prove that readers assay text "completely," and therefore do not sample text to confirm predictions, as maintained by whole language advocates; context interferes with reading; and skill-building approaches to reading have been shown to produce better results than whole language. In general, the book finds that the studies underpinning these claims were biased by the methodology used. The book aims to offer some real solutions, chief of which is making sure that all children have access to interesting reading material so they can achieve the standards of literacy they deserve. Chapters in the book are: (1) "Eye Fixation Studies Do Not Disprove the Goodman-Smith Hypothesis"; (2) "Does Context Interfere with Learning To Read?"; (3) "When Whole Language Means Real Reading, It Is a Consistent Winner over Skills in Method Comparison Studies"; (4) "Eliminating Print Deprivation"; and (5) "Phonemic Awareness (PA) Training for Prelinguistic Children: Do We Need Prenatal PA?" (NKA)

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